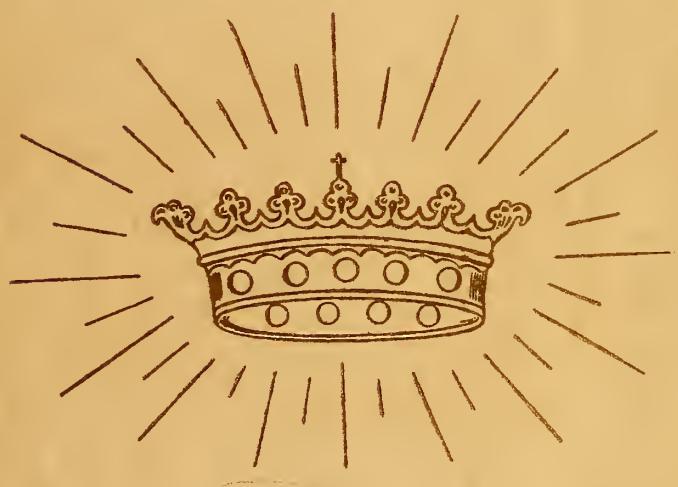


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Songs of Heaven





To All

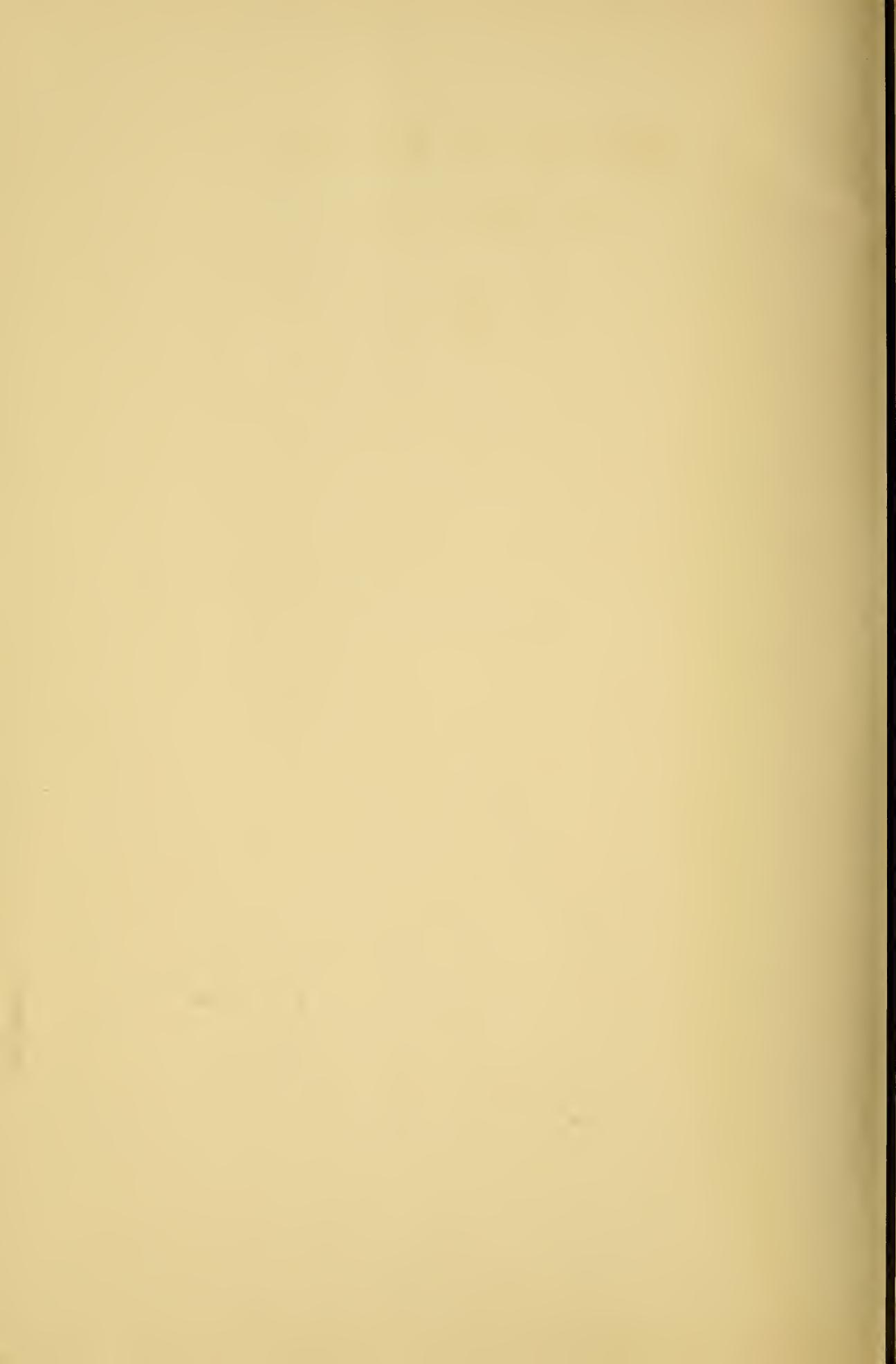
who have known the burden and darkness
of a great sorrow and who would share the comfort and
strength to be found in the faith and vision and sympathy of other souls, and
to all that dear company, whose faces we see no more, but whose love and
whose lives are linked with our own forever, this little chaplet of flowers,
gathered from many fields, is most tenderly inscribed,

In Memory of

Who entered the unseen life

Presented by

FOR PHOTOGRAPH



Songs of Heaven From Many Hearts



COMPILED BY
REV. CHARLES CLARK PIERCE, D. D.
"



THE WEIMAR PRESS
218 BOYD STREET
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA
1909

PR1191
PS
1912

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A Letter

My Dear Friend:

A NEW and overwhelming experience has been thrust upon you. A loved one, whose life was linked to your very soul by ties more sacred and wonderful than any human language or symbol can express, and who walked with you in a sweet companionship, which strengthened, enriched and glorified all your existence, has listened to the call of the silent messenger and passed from your sight, leaving your heart more lonely and desolate than you had ever dared to think possible. Those dear eyes into which you once looked, now give no response to the eager questionings of your soul, and the hand which once clasped yours in tenderest love, now returns no answering pressure.

Some strong one who stood by your side a noble protector, some gentle one, whose sweetness and tender love illuminated the whole world and made it beautiful, some precious little one whose sweet baby fingers twined and wove themselves into the sacred inner cords of your heart, in a way which you once thought impossible, or it may be some aged one whose noble life of service has ever been a bulwark to the best that is within you, is with you now no more as in the days gone by. With whatever there is of the past, which you think you would change were you to live it over again, think how wonderfully precious will be its memory now for all the years to come. Here you have a treasure, of which nothing can ever rob you so long as your own life shall last.

My friend, as one who has experienced and borne the burden of a great sorrow like this one which well nigh crushes you, permit me to say this in loving sympathy with you in your bereavement: Do not think of the loved one as dead. There is no death; "Christ hath abolished death and brought life and immortality to light."

We change the house in which we live, the clothes which we wear, the country in which we reside, but we remain the same, save to go on to new and higher things in life and experience. This dear one for whom your aching heart now yearns so hungrily has only changed houses, passed from the body which could be afflicted with disease and dissolution, to the glorious body, which is to be free forever from these

pains, ailments and imperfections. The fetters of the soul have been broken and thrown aside, and the prison doors flung wide open, that is all. Nothing else has changed, could have changed, only to get a better vision and possess a less hampered and circumscribed existence. The real life is going on, under sunnier skies, and amid more propitious conditions, than ever could have been possible here. Our own love has not grown cold, but has the rather been deepened and intensified. So is it we must believe with the love of the dear one gone now from earthly sight, for you and for the other dear friends. The interest too, which this departed one had in you, and in all those things which were mutually dear to you both, has not necessarily passed away forever. Though some of the things which once worried and perplexed, as well as some things which were held to be of value, are doubtless viewed in a different light, still your loved one is no more lost out of your life, and out of the things which worthily claimed your mutual attention and love, than Christ was lost from the lives and activities of the world which he came to enlighten, when he passed from the physical sight of those who loved and followed him.

And then, too, let not the tears of your sorrow blind your eyes to the great truth that this precious soul of your devotion is not imprisoned in the tomb, to slumber through the long ages of the future, but is "alive with God, forevermore." Our loved ones are not far from us. They are with God, and God is here. They dwell not in some far off sphere, some country resplendent but remote, where they have lost all love and care and interest for those who still toil here in the old ways, but "ever near us tho' unseen, their dear immortal spirits tread."

Let us then not be carried away wholly with our great grief. Think how wonderful God is, how much heavenly love and infinite beauty there must be in the nature of the One able to create souls so beautiful and possessed of so many noble qualities, as you knew in the one who has just been crowned with the supreme experience of this earthly existence. How precious is the thought that He permitted you to have this dear companionship, even for a little while.

Whatever that heaven is to which the friends go when they pass from the ways of this mortal life, from this time on it will ever seem to you nearer and dearer, because of the loved ones there—how the dread which once hung over us, relative to our entering it, disappears, as we

remember that this one so greatly loved has gone along that way just ahead of us.

And finally dear friend, remember this. From that mighty sorrow which now so overwhelms you, something great and beautiful is sure to come into your life, something will enrich and strengthen your soul if you will permit it to do so. Just as when the night is darkest, the stars shine with the greater brilliancy, so out of the black pall of this new and seemingly terrible calamity, you will find if you continue to look upward, new stars of unknown beauty flashing in splendor, to comfort and guide you across the surging sea of life. Look up then, weary, lonely, sorrowing soul, and you will see them, and remember this, that back of them is God. Trust him, dear friend, the Source of all life, and nothing will ever separate you from the presence of your loved ones.

In deepest sympathy,



A Prayer of Submission

O LORD God of the whole earth, all souls are Thine, and our souls and our lives are wholly in thy hands. We have neither the power to resist, nor the right to gainsay thy will, but the heart, darkened and torn with its grief and fears, flees as a bird to its mountain, to Thee. In Thee alone from whom all trial and all blessing alike cometh, is there refuge for the soul. Teach us this day to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

O our Heavenly Father, we cannot bear alone this great burden of life, and all that life involves. Tremblingly do we say, "Thy will be done." O give us the power to accept thy will without fear. Thou O God, didst create the affections which life so often sorely wounds and bereaves; look, we pray Thee, pitifully upon the bleeding of these wounds. Be patient, we beseech Thee, with the weakness of a soul still ungrown and ignorant. Our hearts cling to the objects of their love. It is so hard to give them up and cling to Thee alone, nay rather to know that in Thee we have them still. They were so near, and Thou to our weak faith and imperfect vision, dost often seem so far. Thou hidest thyself, and thy greatness is so great above us, that we sometimes cannot feel thy sympathy as we should.

Heavenly Father, we are dumb before Thee. Be merciful we pray. Manifest the exceeding tenderness of thy compassion. Be pleased to remember how frail we are. And measure not, O God, we beseech Thee, thy goodness by our deserts. We are thy creatures. Thou hast brought us into being. Spare, O Lord, the work of thy hand. Crush not utterly the souls that cry to Thee, out of their deep weakness and dependence.

In the course of that life which Thou alone dost order, whatever it shall please Thee to take from us, or seem to take away, may it please Thee to leave with us the comfort of thy peace. Suffer not our souls to be bewildered utterly in trials, and permit us not to fall into the outer darkness of despair.

Grant, O God, that ultimately the shadows of this troubled life may disappear through the rising of the sun of thy presence and thy love, and that with all those who have gone from our sight, we may meet in "that fair morn of morns" when the sorrows and tears and losses of this life shall be forgotten in the blessed companionships and compensations of the heavenly life.

May the Spirit of all grace and power, which in the Garden and on the Cross did sustain Jesus of Nazareth, graciously be with us in this hour of unutterable darkness and grief, and for his sake, give us the victory, here and hereafter.

*Permission of
Randolph & Co.*

—*Rev. Walter R. Brooks, D. D.*

A Message

DURING these lonely days of strain and suspense, I have wished so much that I could be a little help to you. I can tell you this at least, and pray that you may have from God and your friends and your own heart, strength enough to get through one day at a time. I do not see what else you can do but just live, now. You cannot understand or explain, but you know as well as I, that back of everything is God, and God is light—"we shall see;" and God is love—"we shall be satisfied." It may be a long while, but it will be worth waiting for. Trust Him—all you can—you will be glad you did.

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—*Malthe Babcock.*

Christus Consolator

BESIDE the dead, I knelt for prayer,
And felt a presence as I prayed.
Lo! it was Jesus standing there.
He smiled: "Be not afraid!"

"Lord, thou hast conquered death, we know;
Restore again to life," I said,
"This one who died an hour ago."
He smiled: "He is not dead!"

"Asleep then, as thyself didst say,
Yet thou canst lift the lids that keep
His prisoned eyes from ours away!"
He smiled: "He doth not sleep!"

"Nay then, tho' haply he do wake,
And look upon some fairer dawn,
Restore him to our hearts that ache!"
He smiled: "He is not gone!"

"Alas! too well we know our loss,
Nor hope again our joy to touch
Until the stream of death we cross."
He smiled: "There is no such!"

"Yet our beloved seem so far,
The while we yearn to feel them near,
Albeit with thee we trust they are."
He smiled: "And I am here!"

"Dear Lord, how shall we know that they
Still walk unseen with us and thee,
Nor sleep, nor wander far away?"
He smiled: "Abide in Me."

—*Rossiter Raymond.*

“In Memoriam”

O H YET we trust that somehow good
Will be the final goal of ill,
To pangs of nature, sins of will
Defects of doubt and taints of blood;

That nothing walks with aimless feet,
That no one life will be destroyed,
Or cast as rubbish to the void
When God hath made the pile complete.

So runs my dream: but what am I?
An infant crying in the night,
An infant crying for the light:
And with no language but a cry.

I falter where I firmly trod,
And falling with my weight of cares.
Upon the world's great altar-stairs,
That slope thro' darkness up to God,

I stretch lame hands of faith, and grope,
And gather chaff and dust and call
To what I feel is Lord of all,
And faintly trust the larger hope.

My own dim life should teach me this,
That life shall live forevermore,
Else earth is darkness at the core,
And dust and ashes all that is.

I hold it true whate'er befall;
I feel it when I sorrow most,
‘Tis better to have loved and lost,
Than never to have loved at all.

—Alfred Tennyson.

My Heaven

CAN I forget that yesterday, supernal,
That thrilled my soul with life at meeting thine?
Or shall I fail to reach that morrow, radiant, eternal,
When thy sweet love undimmed shall on me shine?

For tho' the earth is large and heaven is filled with wonder,
And through life's mysteries deep, we see no helpful gleam,
I know that tearful ways which lead true hearts asunder,
Must meet somewhere beyond life's troubled dream.

And tho' thy path and mine seem strangely severed,
And tho' my way be long and lonely ere we meet,
The magic of true love will bring us both together,
Beyond the gates of pearl—in Heaven, complete.

So I still trust my heavenly Father's leading,
And feel that somehow he whose wisdom formed the soul,
Can take these broken hearts, so sad, bereaved, and bleeding,
And from life's fragments make one glorious whole.

And this I know, that should I sadly wander,
A million ages, missing still my way;
Somewhere, O soul of mine, in some fair heaven yonder,
Thy love shall be my heaven again some day.

Yes, best of all, the old love is unbroken,
I know thy presence ever at my side,
Soul answers soul, beyond mere earth born token,
'Tis heaven now, whatever may betide.

—C. C. Pierce.

Beyond

IT SEEMETH such a little way to me,
 Across to that strange country, the beyond;
And yet, not strange, for it has grown to be
 The home of those of whom I am so fond.
They make it seem familiar and most dear,
 As journeying friends, bring distant regions near.

So close it lies that when my sight is clear
 I think I almost see the gleaming strand,
I know I feel those who have gone from here
 Come near enough sometimes to touch my hand.
I often think, but for our veiled eyes,
 We should find heaven right about us lies.

I cannot make it seem a day to dread,
 When from this dear earth I shall journey out
To that still dearer country of the dead,
 And join the lost ones so long dreamed about.
I love this world, yet shall I love to go
 And meet the friends who wait for me I know.

I never stand above a bier and see
 The seal of death set on some well-loved face,
But that I think, "One more to welcome me,
 When I shall cross the intervening space
Between this land and that one 'over there;'
 One more to make the strange beyond seem fair."

And so for me there is no sting of death,
 And so the grave hath lost its victory.
It is but crossing with a bated breath,
 And white, set face—a little strip of sea,
To find the loved ones waiting on the shore,
 More beautiful, more precious than before.

There is No Death

THERE is no death. The stars go down
To rise upon some fairer shore,
And bright in heaven's jeweled crown
They shine forevermore.

There is no death. The dust we tread
Shall change beneath the summer showers
To golden grain or mellow fruit,
Or rainbow-tinted flowers.

There is no death; the leaves may fall,
The flowers may fade and pass away—
They only wait through wintry hours,
The coming of the May.

There is no death. An angel form
Walks o'er the earth with silent tread;
He bears our best loved ones away,
And then we call them "dead."

He leaves our hearts all desolate—
He plucks our fairest, sweetest flowers;
Transplanted into bliss, they now
Adorn immortal bowers.

The bird-like voice, whose joyous tones
Made glad this scene of sin and strife,
Sings now an everlasting song,
Amid the tree of life.

Born into that undying life,
They leave us but to come again;
With joy we welcome them—the same
Except in sin and pain.

And ever near us, tho' unseen,
Their dear immortal spirits tread;
For all this boundless Universe
Is Life—there are no dead.

—J. L. McCreery.

The Coming Life

DEATH turns our thoughts toward immortality. Heaven never seems so real to us as when it becomes the abode of some one whom we have known and loved. And then when the treasures of our hearts are there, we can easily believe that no heart warmed into a glow by the fire of brotherly love will ever suffer an eternal chill; that no spiritual flame that grows brighter with the years will ever be extinguished, never to shine again.

Christ gave us proof of immortality, and yet it would hardly seem necessary that one should rise from the dead to convince us that the grave is not the end. To every created thing God has given a tongue that proclaims a resurrection. If the Father designs to touch with a divine power the cold and pulseless heart of the buried corn and make it burst forth into a new life, will He leave neglected in the earth the soul of man, made in the image of the Creator? If he stoops to give to the rosebush, whose withered blossoms float upon the autumn breeze, the sweet assurance of another springtime, will he refuse the words of hope to the sons of men, when the frosts of winter come? If matter, mute, inanimate, changed by the force of nature into a multitude of forms, can never die, will the spirit of man suffer annihilation when it has paid a brief visit like a royal guest to this tenement of clay? No, I am as sure that there is another life as I am that I live today. I am sure that as the grain of wheat contains within, an invisible germ which can discard its body and build a new one from earth and air, so this body contains a soul which can clothe itself anew when this poor frame crumbles into dust. —*William Jennings Bryan.*

A Letter

Dear Friend:

THE news which this bears to you would be sad were it not for the immortal hope and comforts which come to us through faith in the living Christ. Our dear and ever beloved mother entered the unseen and immortal life yesterday morning. We do not mourn her as one overcome by "the last enemy," but as a daughter of the King, upon whom has been conferred the supreme decoration for faithful service. We do not consider her as dead, but "alive forevermore" and we shall not think of her as gone from us, but as being with God more truly than ever, and God is here. Her faith in the reality and nearness of the heavenly life, grew to her in her last days, to be a certainty, and no shadow of doubt ever crossed her heart. Hereafter when the Christmas time comes around, we shall not think of it as a sad anniversary; but the season of the Savior's birth, will be the time at which she attained her greatest victory. —*C. C. Pierce.*

Our Love

OUR love is not a fading earthly flower:
Its winged seed dropped down from Paradise,
And, nursed by day and night, by sun and shower,
Doth momently to fresher beauty rise:
To us the leafless autumn is not bare
Nor winter's rattling boughs lack lusty green.
Our summer hearts make summer's fullness, where
No leaf, or bud, or blossom may be seen:
For nature's life in love's deep life doth lie,
Love—whose forgetfulness is beauty's death,
Whose mystic key these cells of Thou and I
Into the infinite freedom openeth,
And makes the body's dark and narrow grate,
The wind-flung leaves of Heaven's palace gate.

*Permission of
Houghton, Mifflin Co.*

—J. R. Lowell.

When the Morning Breaks

LEAD kindly light, amid the encircling gloom,
Lead thou me on.
The night is dark and I am far from home,—
Lead thou me on.
Keep thou my feet, I do not ask to see
The distant scene,—one step's enough for me.
I was not ever thus nor prayed that thou
Should'st lead me on:
I loved to choose and see my path, but now
Lead thou me on.
I loved the garish day, and, spite of fears,
Pride ruled my will: remember not past years.
So long thy power hath blessed me, sure it still
Will lead me on;
O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent till
The night is gone;
And with the morn those angel faces smile
Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile.

—John Henry Newman.

Sweetheart

FAREWELL, sweetheart, my precious one,
Goodby, but not forever;
My love for you no words can tell,
Nor long eternity can sever.

Oh, how I miss thy touch, thy smile,
The magic of thine eye,—
They changed this earth to heaven awhile,
Through comradeship, divine and high.

Did I not love thee, heart so dear?
Thou wert most wondrous sweet to me;
Thou wert my song, my life, my cheer,—
My soul found precious rest in thee.

The burden of this broken heart,
My shattered hopes, my fears,
I would to thee alone impart,
Through all the shadowed lonely years.

But thou, dear comrade soul, art gone,
While I, with aching heart,
Must wander on, too sad and lone,
Too desolate to bear my part.

And yet from me thou are not gone;
Deep down within my soul,
I hold thee, love thee still, my own,
And seek with thee, the heavenly goal.

So long and lovingly have we,
This blessed way been given—
The pledge of gladness yet to be,
Along the pathways of some heaven.

God was so very good to us,
He gave such wealth of love and joy,
I found such rest and peace with thee,
Would he that wondrous gift destroy?

He would not make a soul like thine,
With all the treasures of its love,
And bless me with its powers divine,
Save as a pledge of heaven above.

And to that heaven of thy love,
Some glad day I shall come,
I shall in glorious realms above,
Regain my paradise, my home. —C. C. Pierce.

If You Are There

IF YOU are there when I am called to go;
If you can sit and hold my trembling hand,
And whisper words of cheer to me, and show,
The way that leads into the Unknown Land,
I shall not fear the darkness, everywhere,
If you are there.

If you are there when Death shall beckon me,
And slowly, slowly, earthly things shall fade,
Then can I sail across the unknown sea,
And ride the stormy billows unafraid.
I'll look to him above, and not despair,
If you are there.

If you are there when Death with icy touch,
Upon my pallid brow his hand shall place,
I shall not fear the passing overmuch,
For you will point me to God's saving grace;
I'll only see his glory everywhere,
If you are there.

If you are there, I surely will not fear,
When Death shall gently close my weary eyes!
I know 'twill all be well if you are near
And point the shining pathway to the skies,
All will be bright and beautiful and fair,
If you are there.

—E. A. Brininstool.

Heaven Our Home

IT cannot be that earth is man's only abiding place. It cannot be that our life is a bubble, cast up by the ocean of eternity to float for one brief moment upon the surface, and then sink into nothingness and darkness forever. Else why is it that the high and glorious aspirations, which leap like angels from the temples of our hearts, are forever wandering abroad unsatisfied? Why is it that the rainbow and the cloud come over us with a beauty that is not of earth, and then pass off and leave us to muse on their faded loveliness? Why is it that the stars which hold their festival around the midnight throne are set above the grasp of our limited faculties, and are forever mocking us with their unapproachable glory? Finally, why is it that the bright forms of human beauty are presented to the view, and then taken from us, leaving the thousand streams of affections to flow back in an Alpine torrent upon our hearts?

We are born for a higher destiny than that of earth. There is a realm where the rainbow never fades; where the stars will be spread out before us like the islands that slumber on the ocean; and where the beautiful beings that here pass before us like visions will stay in our presence forever.

—George D. Prentice.

Living Still

THEY ask, many of them, what am I going to do now, that she who was the inspiration of it all, is gone. But she is not gone. If in my soul I believed that, I should be desolate indeed. It is only that the river separates us once more as when we were children. I know as well as I knew then, that she is in the garden just beyond, where all her summers are beautiful now, and that she is waiting there for me.

So I shall seek the path to that garden till I find it. I am once more where I dreamed as a boy, and I know that I shall wake, as I did then, and find the truth unspeakably fairer than my dream. Nor do I fear to miss the way, for our Lord himself has charted it, so I cannot go wrong. "I am the way," He said. She went trustfully across the river with Him, and was not afraid. So why should I be? I shall be lonesome, yes! God alone knows how lonesome. But I have the sweet memory of the years we walked together here, and what are a few years of loneliness to the eternity of joy ahead, where hearts are never wrung in parting? And I shall not be idle. I shall be doing what she would have me do, and in it all, as you see, she will yet be the inspiration, as she was for all the years that are gone.

—Jacob A. Riis.

Not Changed, But Glorified

NOT changed, but glorified; Oh, beauteous language,
For those who weep,
Mourning the loss of some dear face departed,
Fallen asleep.
Hushed into silence, never more to comfort
The hearts of men,
Gone like the sunshine of another country,
Beyond our ken.

Oh, dearest dead, we saw the white soul shining
Behind the face,
Bright with the beauty and celestial glory
Of an immortal grace.
What wonder that we stumble, faint and weeping,
And sick with fears,
Since thou hast left us—all alone with sorrow,
And blind with tears?

Can it be possible no words shall welcome
Our coming feet?
How will it look, the face that we have cherished,
When next we meet?
Will it be changed, so glorified and saintly,
That we shall know it not?
Will there be nothing that will say, "I love thee,
And have not forgot?"

Oh, longing heart, the same dear face transfigured
Shall meet thee there
Less sad, less wistful in immortal beauty—
Divinely fair;
The mortal veil, washed pure with many weepings,
Is rent away,
And the great soul that sat within its prison
Hath found the day.

In the clear morning of that other country,
In Paradise,
With the same face that we have loved and cherished,
She shall arise.
Let us be patient, we who mourn with weeping
Some vanished face,
The Lord hath taken but to add more beauty,
And a diviner grace.

Yes, we shall find once more beyond earth's sorrows,
Beyond these skies,
In the fair city of the "sure foundation,"
Those heavenly eyes,
With the same welcome shining through their sweetness,
That met us here—
Eyes from whose beauty God hath banished weeping,
And wiped away the tear.

Think of us dearest one, while o'er life's waters,
We seek the land,
Missing thy voice, thy touch, and the true helping
Of thy pure hand,
Till, through the storm and tempest, safely anchored,
Just on the other side,
We find thy dear face looking through death's shadows,
Not changed, but glorified.

Love and Life

YET hope will dream and faith will trust,
Since He who knows our need is just,
That somehow, somewhere, meet we must.
Alas for him who never sees,
The stars shine through his cypress trees,
Who, hopeless, lays his dead away,
Nor looks to see the breaking day,
Across the mournful marbles play;
Who ne'er hath learned in hours of faith,
The truth to sense and flesh unknown,
That life is ever lord of death,
And love can never lose its own.

—J. G. Whittier.

Undying Love

THAT love which survives the tomb, is one of the noblest attributes of the soul. If it has its woes, it likewise has its comforts; and when the overwhelming burst of grief is calmed into the gentle tear of recollection, when the sudden anguish and the convulsive agony over the present ruins of all that we most loved is softened away into pensive meditation, on all that it was in the days of its loveliness, who would root out such a sorrow from the heart? Though it may sometimes throw a passing cloud over the bright hours of gaiety, or spread a deeper sadness over the hour of gloom, yet who would exchange it even for the song of pleasure, or the burst of revelry?

No, there is a voice from the tomb, sweeter than song. There is a remembrance of the dead to which we turn, even from the charms of the living. Oh! the grave! It buries every error, covers every defect, extinguishes every resentment! From its peaceful bosom spring none but fond regrets and tender recollections. Who can look down upon even the grave of an enemy, and not feel a compunctionous throb, that he should have warred with the poor handful of earth that lies now mouldering before him.

But the grave of those we loved, what a place for tender meditation! There it is that we call up in long review, the whole history of virtue and gentleness, and the thousand endearments lavished upon us, almost unheeded in the daily intercourse of intimacy; there it is that we dwell upon the tenderness, the solemn awful tenderness of the parting scene; the last testimonies of departing love, the thrilling, oh, how thrilling pressure of the hand, the faint and faltering accents struggling to give one more assurance of affection! The last fond look of the eye, turning upon us even from the threshold of existence. Ay, go to the grave of thy loved one, and meditate, and there weave thy chaplet of sweet flowers and strew these fragrant beauties of nature over the sacred spot. It will console thy broken spirit and whisper to thee of a love that rises triumphant over the tomb, and which gloriously lives when the fleshly heart will beat no more.

—*Washington Irving.*

Easter

THEY covered my bed with roses,
And laid it under the snow,
But I was not there my darlings,
Tho' men may tell you so.

Do you see the broken egg shell,
When the young bird soars away?
Is it there in that poor prison,
Or singing to the day?

Do you see the swinging cradle,
That held the butterfly?
That now is soaring gladly,
Up in the azure sky?

Do you know the flinty cover
That wraps the seed men set
Deep in the darkness underground,
And leave to cold and wet?

When comes the spring and sunshine,
The wheat will grow and wave,
But the husks that held the kernel,
Still lieth in the grave.

My sweets, it was my broken shell,
My cradle and my husk,
They covered over with blossoms
And bore away at dusk.

So smile again my darlings,
Be glad when I am free:
God hath you in his keeping,
To bring you safe to me.

—*Rose Terry Cook.*

The Country of the Noble

A BOVE the grandeur of the sunsets
Which delight this earthly clime
And the splendors of the dawnings
 Breaking o'er the hills of time,
Is the richness of the radiance
 Of the land beyond the sun,
Where the noble have their country
 When the work of life is done.

Speech cannot describe their heaven,
 Nor hath earth such brightness known,
For that heaven is the country
 Of the Mighty and his throne;
Man's brief furlongs cannot bound it,
 Nor his reason comprehend:
God alone counts all its headlands,
 And like him it hath no end.

Power almighty flows forever
 Round the wondrous land above,
In its flood and ebbing constant
 To the everlasting Love;
Chanting with the matchless cadence
 Of a deep and boundless sea,
To the continent of heaven,
 Anthems of eternity.

Welcome to those glories given
 From angelic harps of gold,
Shall full often be repeated,
 Yet it never shall grow old;
Music grander than earth's noblest,
 Than all eloquence of words
And the sweetest of the carols
 Of the gladdest of the birds.

And those glories shall the problem
 Of this earthly life explain,
All its bitter turn to sweetness,
 All its losses turn to gain.
And the rapture of the new life
 Shall exceed the griefs of this;
And amid those scenes of grandeur
 Even labor shall be bliss.

His dear name throughout the ages,
 As the aeons circle by,
To the trend and to the cadence
 Of their own eternity,
Shall be theme and inspiration
 In the land beyond the sun,
Where the noble have their country
 When the work of life is done.

—*Aella Greene.*

Come Ye Disconsolate

COME ye disconsolate, where'er ye languish:
 Come to the mercy seat, fervently kneel;
Here bring your wounded hearts, here tell your anguish;
 Earth has no sorrow, that heaven cannot heal.

Joy of the comfortless, light of the straying,
 Hope of the penitent, fadeless and pure;
Here speaks the Comforter tenderly saying—
 Earth has no sorrow, that heaven cannot heal.

Here see the Bread of Life: see waters flowing
 Forth from the throne of God, pure from above,
Come to the feast of love; come, ever knowing
 Earth has no sorrow, but heaven can remove.

—*Thomas Moore.*

Death and the Future

WHAT death will bring to any one is determined by what life has been. There are no broken links on the chain of existence. "Death is no juggler, to transmute qualities at a touch." Death is merely an incident, a transmission, a change of place, not a change of selfhood. Death makes no gap in any life. It is the birth-pang into a higher existence. All the experiences of the present are carried forward into the future; the harvest of character here ripened is there gathered in and stored up. Nothing is lost. As life is begun here, it is continued there. "To be continued in our next," is written at the close of the last chapter of every human life. Out of the darkness of judgment, divine solicitude shines forth with ever increasing brightness. Other religions represent man as seeking God; the religion of the Bible alone represents God as seeking man. So long as the smallest ember of spiritual power lies smouldering beneath the ashes of a ruined life, there is no abatement of the efforts of God to save that soul. When his efforts fail, he mourns with a sorrow of heart which cannot be measured. The difference it makes to him, whether the lost remain so or are at last reclaimed, none can ever know. Into his joy, when the end of his long and loving search has been attained, earth may refuse to enter; but as he returns from the wilderness leading the wanderer home the Heavens will peal their loudest,

"And the angels echo around the throne,
Rejoice, for the Lord brings back his own".

—Rev. James M. Campbell, D. D.

Recognition

WOULD it be like God to create such beautiful, unselfish loves, more like the loves of heaven, than any type we know, just for three score years and ten? Would it be like him to let our souls grow together here, so that the separating is the day of pain, and then wrench them apart for all eternity? What is meant by such expressions as "risen together," "sitting together in heavenly places?" If they mean anything, they mean recognition, friendship, enjoyment. Our friends are not dead nor asleep; they go on living; they are near us always, and God has said, "We should know each other there."

—Elizabeth Stuart Phelps.

The Other World

IT lies around us like a cloud,—
A world we do not see;
Yet the sweet closing of an eye
May bring us there to be.

Its gentle breezes fan our cheek;
Amid our worldly cares
Its gentle voices whisper love,
And mingle with our prayers.

Sweet hearts around us throb and beat,
Sweet helping hands are stirred,
And palpitate the veil between
With beatings almost heard.

The silence—awful, sweet, and calm—
They have no power to break;
For mortal words are not for them
To utter or partake.

So thin, so soft, so sweet they glide,
So near to press they seem,—
They softly lull us to our rest,
And melt into our dream.

And in the hush of rest they bring
'Tis easy now to see
How and how sweet a thing
The hour of death may be.

To close the eye, and close the ear,
Rapt in a trance of bliss,
To gently dream in loving arms
And wake to that from this.

Scarce knowing if we wake or sleep,
Scarce asking where we are,
To feel all evil sink away,
All sorrow and all care.

Sweet souls around us watch us still,
 Press nearer to our side,
Into our thoughts, into our prayers,
 With gentle helpings glide.

Let death between us be as naught,
 A dried and vanished stream;
Our joy the glad reality,
 This suffering life the dream.

—*Harriet Beecher Stowe.*

Futurity

I KNOW not how, nor when nor where—
 Yet I believe that we shall meet
Beyond that tapestry of air,
 When mortal pulses cease to beat.

I cannot think that thou wert made
 So wondrously fair to see—
To bloom a season, then to fade
 And vanish as a dream from me.

While gazing in deep eyes of thine,
 I deem I read the truth to be
That thou the image of divine
 Will live through all eternity.

And I, aware of my unworth,
 Still fondly trust the power of love
To lift me upward from the earth,
 Until I reach the plane above.

I know not which of us will go
 To pioneer that distant state,
But something whispers me: “We know
 The first will for the other wait.”

So now I rest contentedly,
 Regarding neither time nor place,
As in the end mine eyes shall see
 Mine own beloved face to face.

—*Louis F. Curtis.*

Fulfillment

THE harmony of man with the world in which he lives, is never complete. He is ever vibrating between trembling apprehensions and glowing aspirations. His heart throbs constantly with those unsatisfied desires with which God has crowned him, but which are so far, so infinitely far from complete realization in any condition of life. Amid conscious infirmities, under sentence of death, there is ever a feeling after, if haply he may find his home. The race is homesick. It longs for a knowledge more satisfying, a voice of welcome more cordial, an approval more tranquillizing, and a resting place more permanent, than earth can give.

The only beings on earth whom God has so created as to be satisfied with this life are brutes and fools. Man becomes more restless, the more his wants are supplied. Grant his desires, and you multiply them. Deck him with kingly robes and you are not so near satisfying him as if he were in tattered rags. Clothe him with righteousness as with a garment, and you have increased his longings for a purer life—a resurrection in the likeness of his Redeemer.

The life of man has no meaning, if this throbbing nature of his ceases to live at physical death. But on the supposition that man is at present placed in an unnatural and temporal sphere, and that he will attain the end and object of his creation, sometime, somewhere, on the supposition that every man will find his place—that all may find what they hope or expect—the riddles are explained. Man is no longer the “wretch” and the “fool” of creation, which the maxims of all nations have otherwise justly declared him to be, but the object of God’s tender solicitude, the being whose true sphere is in eternity. Is not the blunder of man’s creation unpardonable, unless there be for him a future existence?

—*L. T. Townsend, D. D.*

Beyond

“O, SO far,” one saith, “so far,
Lies the shadow-circled shore;
Who shall tell us where they are,
Since they come to us no more?
Farther than the arrow flies,
Upward sped from swiftest string;
Farther than the cloud-wreaths rise
From the mountains where they cling;
Nor the wing of homing bird
Bears our greetings to that strand,
Nor our grief-wrung sighs have stirred
Aught of answer from that land.
O, so far, so strange and far
Out beyond the tideless bar,
Farther than the storm-cloud lightens,
Farther than the sunset brightens;
Not the eagle’s loftiest soaring,
Nor love’s uttermost imploring,
Scales the lowest battlement
Of the city where they went.”

Nay, but said He so who came
Thence, and thither went again?
Now and yesterday the same,
Son of God, and man of men?
Going did he close the gate
Fast behind, an iron bar?
We who strive and they who wait—
Are we set apart so far?
Though the veil of death be dim,
Shall not love His tryst fulfil?
He with us, and they with Him,
Are we not together still?
Not beyond the sunset height,
Not beyond the ocean-foam;
Near, tho’ hidden from our sight,
As hearth-side friends of home;

Near—as ears that lean to catch
Steps beyond a lifting latch;
Veiled—as glad eyes blind with tears
When a long-wished joy appears.

O, not far they dwell, not far,
Near as faith and mercy are;
Star-sown heights nor depths can part
Friends who meet in Jesus' heart.
Ramparts of the sunrise sky,
Bastions of infinity,
Are but outworks of the home
Unto which we two shall come.
Here the gate is open wide
 There the farthest courts of space
Center on one altar-side,
 Lighted by one blessed Face.
We on earth our own above,
Linked in hope and life and love—
For the city where they went
Is the home of heart-content.

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—*Mabel Earle.*

“Goodby, Till Morning”

“GOOD-BY, till morning come again,”
 We part, but not with aught of pain,
The night is short, and hope is sweet,
It fills our hearts, and wings our feet;
 And so we sing the glad refrain,
“Good-by, till morning come again.”

“Good-by, till morning come again,”
 The shade of death brings thought of pain,
But could we know how short the night
That falls, and hides them from our sight,
 Our hearts would sing the glad refrain,
“Good-by, till morning come again.”

Anon.

My Own

I DO not think of them as dead
Who walk with me no more;
Along the path of life I tread,
They have but gone before.

The Father's house is mansioned fair
Beyond my vision dim;
All souls are his and here or there
Are living unto him.

And still their silent ministry
Within my heart hath place,
As when on earth they walked with me
And met me face to face.

Their lives are made forever mine;
What they to me have been
Hath left henceforth its seal and sign
Engraven deep within.

Mine are they by an ownership
Nor time nor death can free;
For God hath given love to keep
Its own eternally.

—*Frederick L. Hosmer.*

In the Night

OUT of the night she came to me,
Into the dark she went—
Now no more than a name to me,
A dear dream that God sent.

It was a dearer dream to me
Than any rhyme can tell:
Her name will ever seem to me
Sweeter than evening bell.

She filled life's empty cup to me
 Brimful, a moment's space,
With soft eyes looking up to me
 To drink to her dear face.

Out of the dark she came to me,
 Through the night she went away;
But the night is never the same to me
 She left a hope of day!

—*Odell Shepard.*

The Choir Invisible

O H, may I join the choir invisible
 Of those immortal dead who live again
In minds made better by their presence; live
In pulses stirred to generosity,
In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn
For miserable aims that end in self,
In thoughts sublime that pierce the night like stars,
And with their mild persistence, urge men's search
To vaster issues. So to live is heaven;
To make undying music in the world,
Breathing as beauteous order that controls
With growing sway the growing life of man.

 This is life to come,
Which martyred men have made more glorious
For us to strive for. May I reach
That purest heaven, to be to other souls
The cup of strength in some great agony,
Enkindle generous ardor, feed pure love,
Beget the smiles that have no cruelty—
Be the sweet presence of a good diffused,
And in diffusion ever more intense.
So shall I join the choir invisible
Whose music is the gladness of the world.

—*George Eliot.*

Somewhere

HOW can I cease to pray for thee? Somewhere
In God's great universe thou art to-day.
Can he not reach thee with his tender care?
Can he not hear me when for thee I pray?

What matters it to Him who holds within
The hollow of his hand all worlds, all space,
That thou art done with earthly pain and sin?
Somewhere within his ken thou hast a place.

Somewhere thou livest and hast need of Him;
Somewhere thy soul sees higher heights to climb,
And somewhere still there may be valleys dim
That thou must pass to reach the hills sublime.

Then all the more because thou canst not hear,
Poor human words of blessing will I pray.
O true brave heart; God bless thee, wheresoe'er
In his great universe thou art to-day.

—*Julia Caroline Dorr.*

Plus Ultra

FAR beyond the sunrise and the sunset rises
Heaven, with worlds on worlds that lighten and respond:
Thought can see not thence the goal of hope's surmises
Far beyond.

Night and day have made an everlasting bond
Each with each to hide in yet more deep disguises
Truth, till souls of men that thirst for truth despond.

All that man in pride of spirit slight or prizes,
All the dreams that make him fearful, fain or fond,
Fade at forethought's touch of life's unknown surprises
Far beyond.

—*Algernon Charles Swinburne.*

Life and Death

LET us come at once to the fountain head of Christian experience, our Lord Jesus Christ. Reading his words and his life together, and taking our stand at his cross, we learn that suffering is the realization of the sublimity of the good—without it, even God would go short of that experience. And here the light of Jesus lightens the darkness of our perplexity. His goodness was sublime, when seen in the setting of physical limitations, involving the very worst that earthly evil could inflict, and culmination in his death. To such goodness as his, death was only the emancipation from those hampering conditions, without which his divine glory could not have been what it was. Death was his home-going, his liberation from the thralldom and restriction, which had power to cause him pain; it was the entrance upon his true life, the life of eternal freedom and joy.

So it is with us. Pain and sorrow are God himself breaking the fetters which are binding us to the things of time and sense. Death is only our call homeward to where we belong. Every seeming disaster is but the shattering of a form, to liberate a reality that is too great for it. This life does not matter much except as an arena in which to manifest a little of the eternal glory which we share with God. There is no real reason why we should consider it a calamity that God has liberated a spirit from its earthly tenement and taken it home to himself, and some day we shall smile to think that we ever thought so.

—R. J. Campbell.

Immortality

MAN is an infinite little copy of God. Little as I am, I feel the God in me, because I can also bring forth from out of my chaos. I am rising, I know toward the sky. The sunshine is on my head. The earth gives me its generous sap, but heaven lights me with the reflection of unknown worlds. Winter is on my head, and eternal spring is in my heart. The nearer I approach the end, the plainer I hear around me the immortal symphonies of the worlds which invite me. It is marvelous yet simple. It is a fairy tale and it is history. For half a century I have been writing my thoughts in prose and verse, history philosophy, drama, romance tradition satire, ode and song. I have tried all, but feel that I have not said a thousandth part of what is in me. When I go down to the grave I can say like many others, I have finished my day's work; but I cannot say I have finished my life. My days will begin again the next morning. The tomb is not a blind alley; it is a thoroughfare. It closes on the twilight to open on the dawn.

—Victor Hugo.

Heavenward

CALM as beneath its mother's eyes,
In sleep the smiling infant lies,
So, watched by all the stars at night,
Yon landscape sleeps in light.
And while the night breeze dies away,
Like relics of some faded strain,
Loved voices, lost for many a day,
Seem whispering round me once again
Oh youth! oh love! ye dreams that shed
Such glory once—where are ye fled?

Pure ray of light that down the sky,
Art pointing like an angel's wand,
As if to guide to realms that lie
In that bright sea beyond:
We know that in some brighter deep
Than e'en that tranquil moonlit main,
There is a land where those who weep
Shall wake to smile again.

—*Thomas Moore.*

I Shall Know Thee

HOW shall I know thee in the sphere that keeps
The disembodied spirits of the dead,
When all of thee that time could wither sleeps
And perishes amidst the dust we tread?

For I shall feel the sting of ceaseless pain
If there I meet thy gentle presence not;
Nor hear the voice I love, nor read again
In thy beloved eyes the tender thought.

Will not thine own true heart demand me there?
That heart whose fondest throbs to me were given;
My name on earth was ever in thy prayer,
And wilt thou never utter it in heaven?

In meadows fanned by heaven's life-breathing wind,
In the resplendence of that glorious sphere,
And larger movements of the unfettered mind,
Wilt thou forget the love that joined us here?

Yet though thou wear'st the glory of the sky,
Wilt thou not keep the same beloved name,
The same fair, thoughtful brow, and gentle eye,
Lovelier in heaven's sweet climate, yet the same?

Shalt thou not teach me in that calmer home
The wisdom that I learned so ill in this—
The wisdom which is love—till I become
Thy fit companion in that land of bliss?

—*William Cullen Bryant.*

Farther On

I HEAR it singing, sweetly singing,
Singing in an undertone,
Singing as if God had taught it—
“It is better farther on.”

Night and day it sings the sonnet,
Sings it while it sits alone;
Sings so that the heart may hear it,
“It is better farther on.”

Sits upon the grave and sings it;
Sings it while the heart would groan,
Sings it when the shadows darken—
“It is better farther on.”

Farther on? Ah, how much farther?
Count the milestones one by one;
No; no counting, only trusting—
It is better farther on.

The Infinite

INTO the eternal shadows
That gird thy life around,
Into the infinite silence
Wherewith Death's shore is bound,
Thou art gone forth beloved;
And I were mean to weep,
That thou hast left life's shallows,
And dost possess the Deep.

Thou liest low and silent,
Thy heart is cold and still,
Thine eyes are shut forever,
And death has had his will;
He loved and would have taken,
I loved and would have kept,
We strove—and he was stronger,
And I have never wept.

Death may possess thy body,
Thy soul is still with me,
More sunny and more gladsome
Than it was wont to be:
Thy body was a fetter
That bound me to the flesh
Thank God that it is broken,
And now I live afresh.

Now I can see thee clearly,
The dusky cloud of clay,
That hid thy starry spirit,
Is rent and blown away:
To earth I give thy body,
Thy spirit to the sky,
I saw its bright wings growing,
And knew that it must fly.

Now I can love thee truly,
For nothing comes between
The senses and thy spirit,
 The seen and the unseen;
Lift the eternal shadows,
 The silence bursts apart,
And the soul's boundless future
Is present in my heart.

Emancipation

WHY be afraid of death,
As though your life were breath?
Death but anoints your eyes
 With clay. O glad surprise.
Why should you be forlorn?
 Death only husks the corn.
Why should you fear to meet
 The thresher of the wheat?
Is sleep a thing to dread?
 Yet sleeping you are dead
Till you awake and rise
 Here, or beyond the skies.
Why should it be a wrench
 To leave your wooden bench,
Why not with happy shout,
 Run home when school is out?
The dear ones left behind.
 O foolish one and blind.
A day—and you will meet,—
 A night—and you will greet.
This is the death of Death,
 To breathe away the breath
And know the end of strife
 And taste the deathless life
And joy without a fear,
 And smile without a tear,
And work with heaven's rest,
 And find the last the best.

Sometime

SOMETIMES, when all life's lessons have been learned,
And sun and moon forevermore have set,
The things which our weak judgment here have spurned,
The things o'er which we have grieved with lashes wet,
Will flash before us out of life's dark night,
As stars shine most in deeper tints of blue
And we shall see how all God's plans were right,
And how what seemed reproof was love most true.

And if sometimes commingled with life's wine,
We find the wormwood and rebel and shrink,
Be sure a wiser hand than yours or mine
Pours out this portion for our lips to drink:
And if some friend we love is lying low,
Where human kisses cannot reach his face,
O do not blame your loving Father so,
But wear your crown of sorrow with obedient grace.

And you shall shortly know that lengthened breath,
Is not the sweetest gift God sends his friend,
And that sometimes the sable pall of death
Conceals the fairest boon his love can send.
If we could push ajar the gates of life,
And stand within and all God's workings see
We could interpret all this doubt and strife,
And for each mystery could find a key.

But not to-day. Then be content poor heart;
God's plans like lillies pure and white unfold.
We must not tear the close shut leaves apart;
Time will reveal the calyxes of gold;
And if through patient toil we reach the land
Where tired feet with sandals loose may rest,
When we shall clearly know and understand,
I feel that we shall say, "God knew the best."

Over the River They Beckon

OVER the river they beckon to me,
Loved ones who've crossed to the other side,
The gleam of their snowy robes I see,
But their voices are lost in the dashing tide.
There's one with ringlets of sunny gold,
And eyes with the reflection of heaven's blue,
He crossed in the twilight gray and cold,
And the pale mists hid him from mortal view;
We saw not the angels who met him there,
The gates of the city we could not see;
Over the river, over the river,
My brother stands waiting to welcome me.

Over the river, the boatman pale
Carried another, the household pet;
Her brown curls waved in the gentle gale,
Precious darling, I see her yet.
She crossed on her bosom her dimpled hands,
And fearlessly entered the phantom bark,
We felt it glide from the silver sands,
And all our sunshine grew strangely dark;
We know she is safe on the further side,
Where all the ransomed and angels be;
Over the river, the mystic river,
My childhood's idol is waiting for me.

And I sit and think when the sunset's gold
Is flushing river and hill and shore,
I shall one day stand by the water cold
And list for the sound of the boatman's oar;
And watch for a gleam of the flapping sail,
I shall hear the boat as it gains the strand,
I shall pass from sight with the boatman pale,
To the better shore of the spirit land.
I shall know the loved who have gone before,
And joyfully sweet shall the meeting be,
When over the river, the peaceful river,
The Angel of Life shall carry me.

—Nancy A. W. Priest.

Sometime We'll Understand

NOT now, but in the coming years, when we shall reach the better land,

We'll read the meaning of our tears, and there, sometime, we'll understand.

We'll catch the broken threads again, and finish what we here began,
Heaven will the mystery explain, and then, ah, then we'll understand.

We'll know why clouds instead of sun, were over many a cherished plan,
Why songs have ceased when scarce begun, for there, sometime, we'll understand.

Why what we long for most of all, eludes so oft our eager hand,
Why hopes are crushed and castles fall, up there, sometime, we'll understand.

God knows the way, He holds the key, He guides us with unerring hand,
Sometime with tearless eyes we'll see, yes, there, up there, we'll understand.

Then trust in God, thro' all thy days; fear not for He doth hold thy hand,

Tho' dark the night, still sing and praise, sometime, sometime, we'll understand.

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—Maxwell N. Cornelius.

Resignation

THERE is no flock, however watched and tended,
But one dead lamb is there,
There is no fireside howsoe'er defended,
But has one vacant chair.

The air is full of farewells to the dying;
And mournings for the dead;
The heart of Rachel for her children crying,
Will not be comforted.

Let us be patient. These severe afflictions
Not from the ground arise.
But oftentimes celestial benedictions
Assume this dark disguise.

We see but dimly through the mists and vapors;
Amid these earthly damps,
What seem to us but sad funeral tapers
May be heaven's distant lamps.

There is no death. What seems so is transition;
This life of mortal breath
Is but a suburb of the life elysian,
Whose portals we call death.

And tho' at times impetuous with emotion
And anguish long suppressed,
The swelling heart heaves moaning like the ocean,
That cannot be at rest,—

We will be patient and assuage the feeling
We may not wholly stay;
By silence sanctifying, not concealing,
The grief that must have way.

—H. W. Longfellow.

The Mountains of Life

THERE'S a land far away, 'mid the stars we are told,
Where they know not the sorrow of time,—
Where the pure waters wander through valleys of gold,
And life is a treasure sublime;—
'Tis the land of our God, 'tis the home of the soul,
Where the ages of splendor eternally roll;
Where the way weary traveler reaches his goal,
On the evergreen Mountains of Life.

Our gaze cannot soar to that beautiful land,
But our visions have told of its bliss,—
And our soul by the gale of its gardens are fanned,
When we faint in the gardens of this;
And we sometimes have longed for its holy repose,
When our spirits were torn with temptations and woes,
And we've drank from the tide of the river that flows,
From the evergreen Mountains of Life.

Oh, the stars never tread the blue heavens at night,
But we think where the ransomed have trod,
And the day never smiles from his palace of light,
But we feel the bright smile of our God.
We are traveling homeward through changes and gloom,
To a kingdom where pleasures unceasingly bloom,
And our guide is the glory that shines through the tomb,
From the evergreen Mountains of God.

—*J. G. Clark.*

Heaven's Rest

THERE is an hour of peaceful rest,
To mourning wanderers given;
There is a joy for souls distrest,
A balm for every wounded breast,
‘Tis found above, in heaven.

There is a soft, a downy bed,
‘Tis fair as breath of even;
A couch for weary mortals spread,
Where they may rest the aching head,
And find repose—in heaven.

There is a home for weary souls
By sin and sorrow driven;
When tossed on life’s tempestuous shoals,
When storms arise and ocean rolls,
And all is drear but heaven.

There, Faith lifts up her cheerful eye,
To brighten prospects given;
And views the tempest passing by,
The evening shadows quickly fly,
And all serene in heaven.

There fragrant flowers, immortal bloom,
And joy’s supreme are given;
There rays divine disperse the gloom:
Beyond the confines of the tomb
Appears the dawn of heaven.

—*William Bingham Tappan.*

Progress

EVERY event agreeable to the course of nature ought to be looked on as a real good; and surely none can be more natural than for an old man to die. The disunion of the soul and the body is effected in the young by dint of violence, but is wrought out in the old by a mere fullness of the completion of years. The ripeness of death I perceive in myself with much satisfaction; and I look forward to my approaching dissolution as to the entrance into a secure haven, where I may at length find a happy repose from the fatigues of a long voyage.

The nearer death advances toward me, the more clearly I seem to discern its real nature. The soul, during her confinement within this prison of the body, is doomed by fate to undergo a severe penance; for her native seat is in heaven; and it is with reluctance that she is forced down from those celestial mansions into these lower regions, where all is foreign and repugnant to her nature.

This opinion I am induced to embrace, not only as agreeable to the best deductions of reason, but in just deference also to the most noble and distinguished philosophers. When I consider the faculty with which the human mind is endued, its amazing celerity, its wonderful power in recollecting past events, and its sagacity in determining the future, together with its numberless discoveries in the arts and sciences, I feel a conscious conviction that this active comprehensive principle cannot possibly be of a mortal nature.

For my own part, I feel myself transported with the most ardent impatience to join the society of my departed friends, whose characters I greatly respected and whose persons I sincerely loved. Nor is this earnest wish confined to those excellent persons alone with whom I was formerly connected: I ardently wish to visit those celebrated worthies of whose honorable conduct I have heard and read much. To this glorious assembly I am speedily advancing; and I would not now be turned back in my journey, even on the assured condition that my youth, like that of Pelias, should again be restored. In short, I consider this world as a place which Nature never designed for my permanent abode; and I look upon my departure from it, not as being driven from my habitation, but as leaving my inn.

—Cicero.

Guidance

I LONG for household voices gone,
For vanished smiles I long,
But God hath led my dear ones on,
And he can do no wrong.

I know not what the future hath
Of marvel or surprise,
Assured alone that life and death,
His mercy underlies.

I dimly guess from blessings known
Of greater out of sight,
And with the chastened Psalmist own
His judgments too are right.

And so beside the silent sea,
I wait with muffled oar;
No harm from him can come to me,
On ocean or on shore.

I know not where His islands lift
Their fronded palms in air,
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond His love and care.

—J. G. Whittier.

I Shall be Satisfied

THERE is a land where every pulse is thrilling
With raptures earth's sojourners may not know,
Where heaven's repose the weary heart is stilling,
And peacefully life's time-tossed currents flow.

Far out of sight, while yet the flesh enfolds us,
Lies the fair city where our hearts abide,
And of its bliss is naught more wondrous told us
Than these few words,—“I shall be satisfied.”

O blessed thought, to know the spirit's yearning
For sweet companionship with kindred minds—
The silent love that here meets no returning—
The inspiration which no language finds,

Shall there be satisfied the soul's vague longing—

The aching void which nothing earthly fills:
Oh, what desires upon my soul are thronging,
As I look upward to the heavenly hills!

Thither my weak and weary steps are tending—

Savior and Lord, with thy frail child abide!
Guide me toward home, where all my wanderings ending,
I shall see thee, and there "be satisfied."

Prospice

FEAR death?—to feel the fog in my throat,
The mist in my face,
When the snows begin and the blasts denote,
I am nearing the place,
The power of the night, the press of the storm,
The post of the foe;
Where he stands, the Arch Fear in a visible form,
Yet the strong man must go;
For the journey is done and the summit attain'd,
And the barriers fall,
Though a battle's to fight ere the guerdon be gained,
The reward of it all.
I was ever a fighter, so—one fight more,
The best and the last!
I would hate that death bandaged my eyes and forebore,
And bade me creep past.
No! let me taste the whole of it, fare like my peers,
The heroes of old;
Bear the brunt, in a minute pay glad life's arrears
Of pain, darkness and cold.
For sudden the worst turns the best to the brave,
The black minute's at end,
And the elements rage, the field voices that rave
Shall dwindle, shall blend,
Shall change, shall become first a peace out of pain,
Then a light, then thy breast,
O thou soul of my soul! I shall clasp thee again,
And with God be the rest!

—*Robert Browning.*

Mother

MOTHER left us at sunset yesterday—crossing the great divide. With a fortitude that has graced none more fair, she took her leave of life without a fear. Through weeks of silent suffering she looked calmly into the future, and did not falter; with a heroism born of her supreme faith in Jesus of Nazareth she approached the end, trilling with her latest breath the high note of exultation—as one who knocks at the gate of eternal morning.

Each returning springtime, when the lilacs and the snowball hold their carnival, will recall to us the passing of the sweetest, noblest character we have known. Shrouded in her robes immaculate, asleep beneath a wilderness of flowers, that fain would have kissed her eyelids to awakening, we sent the precious earthly casket back to the old eastern home. There, beneath the whispering pines, within sound of the babbling stream which for more than forty years was to her the sweetest music of earth,

“We paused and breathed a prayer above the sod,
And left her to her rest and God.”

With her ear attuned to the music of the infinite she caught up the celestial strain, and the harmonies of a noble life, set vibrating by her on earth, were blended triumphantly with the eternal anthems of the heavenly home.

—*Luther C. Bailey.*

The Contemplation of Immortality

BRETHREN, I beseech you, treasure the thought of endless life more than you do. I know not how it is, but it seems to me that the Christianity of this day is largely losing the habitual contemplation of immortality which gave so much of its strength to the religion of past generations. We are all so busy in setting forth and enforcing the blessings of Christianity in its effects in the present life, that I fear we are largely forgetting what it does for us at the end and beyond the end. And I would that we all thought more of the exodus from this life and of our entrance into that life, in the light of Christ's death and resurrection. Such contemplation will not unfit us for any duty or any enjoyment. It will lift us above the absorbed occupation with present trivialities, which is the bane of all that is good and noble. It will teach us a solemn scorn of ills. It will set on the furthest horizon a great light instead of a doleful darkness, and it will deliver us from the dread of that “shadow feared of man,” but not of those who, listening to Jesus Christ, have been taught that to depart is to be with Him.

—*Alexander McLaren.*

Calmly

CALMLY, calmly, lay him down!
He has won a noble fight;
He has battled for the right;
He has won a fadeless crown.

Mem'ries all too bright for tears,
 Crowd around us from the past;
 He was faithful to the last—
 Faithful through long toilsome years.

All that makes for human good,
 Freedom, righteousness and truth,
 These the objects of his youth,
 Unto age he still pursued.

Kind and gentle was his soul,
 Yet it had a glorious might;
 Clouded minds it filled with light,
 Wounded spirits it made whole.

Hoping, trusting, lay him down!
 Many in the realms above
 Look for him with eyes of love,
 Wreathing him immortal crown.

His Ways

GOD'S ways are not our ways, and dim and dark
 Sometimes they seem, and sorrow-filled,
 As if all joy had died, and Grief distilled
 Her tears in liquid fire. Then, then, O hark!
 God speaks! Be not afraid, my child,
 Though tempests rave and storms break wild;
 For I am near, behind the sullen dark,
 My hand upon the helm, I guide thy bark.

—Eliza A. Otis.

The Angels of Grief

WITH silence only as their benediction,
God's angels come
Where in the shadow of a great affliction,
 The soul sits dumb.
Yet would I say what thine own heart approveth;
 Our Father's will,
Calling to him the dear one whom he loveth,
 Is mercy still.
Not upon thee or thine the solemn angel
 Hath evil wrought;
The funeral anthem is a glad evangel,—
 The good die not.
God calls our loved ones, but we lose not wholly,
 What he hath given;
They live on earth, in thought and deed as truly
 As we in heaven.

—J. G. Whittier.

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Heaven

BEYOND these chilling winds and gloomy skies,
 Beneath death's cloudy portal,
There is a land where beauty never dies,
 Where love becomes immortal.
A land whose life is never dimmed by shade,
 Whose fields are ever vernal;
Where nothing beautiful can ever fade
 But blooms for aye eternal.
The city's shining towers we may not see
 With our dim earthly vision,
For Death, the silent warder keeps the key
 That opes the gates elysian.
But sometimes when adown the western sky,
 A fiery sunset lingers,
Its golden gates swing inward noiselessly
 Unlocked by unseen fingers.

And while they stand a moment half ajar,
 Gleams from the inner glory
Stream brightly through the azure vault afar,
 And half reveal the story.

O land unknown! O land divine!
 Father all-wise eternal,
Oh, guide these wandering wayworn feet of mine
 Into those pastures vernal.

—*Nancy W. Priest.*

Crossing the Bar

SUNSET and evening star,
 And one clear call for me,
And may there be no moaning of the bar
 When I put out to sea.

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
 Too full for sound or foam,
When that which drew from out the mighty deep
 Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,
 And after that the dark,
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
 When I embark.

For though from out our bourne of time and place
 The flood may bear me far,
I hope to meet my pilot face to face,
 When I have crossed the bar.

—*Tennyson.*

From the Bible

THE Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil: for thou art with me: thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory: It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body. And as we have borne the image of the earthly we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

FOR this corruptible must put on incorruption,

And this mortal must put on immortality,

But when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption,

And this mortal shall have put on immortality,

Then shall come to pass the saying that is written,

Death is swallowed up in victory.

O death where is thy victory?

O death where is thy sting? 1. Cor. 15:53-55.

They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more;

Neither shall the sun strike them nor any heat:

For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall be their shepherd,

And shall guide them unto the fountains of waters of life,

And God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes. Rev. 7:16-17.

Let not your hearts be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. John 14:1-3.

I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. John 14:16, 27.

I am the resurrection and the life:
He that believeth in me though he were dead
Yet shall he live again,
And whosoever liveth and believeth in me
Shall never die. *John 11:25, 26.*

But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren,
Concerning them which are asleep,
That ye sorrow not even as others
Which have no hope.
For, if we believe that Jesus died
And rose again, even so
Them also which sleep in Jesus
Will God bring with him. *1. Thess. 5:13, 14*

The Land of Eternal Life

AND he showed me a pure river of water of life,
Clear as crystal,
Proceeding out of the throne of God,
And of the Lamb.

And in the midst of the street of it
And on either side of the river
Was there the tree of life,
Bearing twelve manner of fruits,
And yielding her fruit every month;
And the leaves of the tree
Were for the healing of the nations.

And there shall be no more curse,
But the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it,
And his servants shall serve him,
And they shall see his face, and his name
Shall be in their foreheads.

And there shall be no night there,
And they need no candle, neither light of the sun,
For the Lord God giveth them light,
And they shall reign forever and ever.

Blessed are they that do his commandments,
That they may have right to the tree of life,
And may enter in through the gates
Into the city.

Revelation, 22.

The Old Churchyard

IN THE old churchyard, tho' the sun at morning gleams,
They who sleep within its bosom, never waken from their dreams,
Nor answer when you call them, nor listen when you speak,
Nor know you weep above them, and that your heart may break;
But still amid the silence, 'neath the soft, green mantled sward,
They sweetly rest and slumber, in the old churchyard.

Yet, somehow, when the gentle winds across the grasses blow,
There is something in its whisper, like the voice you used to know,
And you dream that as it passes, every gleaming drop of dew
Is a tear that some lost loved one, has left behind for you,
And the soul leaps through the gates that Death, for pity leaves unbarred,
Twixt you and those that love you, in the old churchyard.

Mine own are there, mine own that left me lonely long ago,
For whom my heart full long hath wept and still doth hunger so;
No stranger sleeps among them all, not one, but could he rise,
Would welcome me with all the dear, old gladness in his eyes,
And so I bend above them, feeling still their love will guard,
And cherish him who mourns them in the old churchyard.

Oh, the old churchyard! tho' I wander o'er the sea,
Through farthest leagues of distance, it is ever near to me.
Life brings me no new lessons that can teach me to forget
The love that first it brought me, and is the fondest yet.
And when the days are ended, and the night comes on unstarr'd,
There is rest for hearts aweary, in the old churchyard.

—*Anon.*

Goodby

MAY all the sweet and thrilling influences of fragrant fields, of flowering plants, of bursting buds and blossoming vines, of silvery streams and genial showers, of setting suns, of jeweled nights and dawning days, melodious with the songs of birds and with all the wondrous harmonies of Nature, be with this sleeping form.

With morn, with noon, with night; with changing clouds and changeless stars; with grass, with trees, and singing birds; with leaf and bud; with fragrant flowers and blossoming vines; with all the sweet and beneficent influences of nature, and with the tender and loving memory of friends and kindred, we leave this one we loved.

—*W. C. Bowman.*

Fraternal Farewell

IN THIS fair spot, "God's acre,"
We leave—with gentle tread —
Our Brothers who have "gone before,"
Our loved and honored dead.

But still—tho' in the daily throng,
Of Time's onmoving host,
We see their manly forms no more—
They surely are not lost.

But ever in our heart of hearts,
Their memory we shall keep,
While in this consecrated spot,
Their sacred ashes sleep.

Till as the circling years shall pass,
We too shall with them rest,
Within the great Grand Lodge at last,
In Heaven, forever blest.

—*C. C. Pierce.*

Closing Words

DEAR FRIENDS:—

We have gathered here, that we may reverently lay away, in its final resting place, the dear earthly tabernacle of this one we loved so well. Tearfully, tenderly, and with lonely hearts, do we commit this beloved form to the keeping of "Mother Earth," where all those who have gone before, have found a resting place—where all who live, and all who will yet live, must finally be laid.

But we know that our loved one is not really dead, and knowing this we "sorrow not as those which have no hope." The dear soul we knew, has simply moved out of the body that we see, into the body that we cannot see—gone from the "natural body" to dwell in the "spiritual body."

Deeply do we sorrow, because we shall look upon this beloved earthly form no more, but we rejoice amid our tears, in a knowledge of life, which is triumphant over seeming death, in a faith which sees beyond the grave, and in a blessed consciousness that our unseen loved ones are alive with God forever.

We do not commit our loved one to this narrow resting place, but leave here the body only, the frail, earthly and perishing tabernacle of the soul—the outgrown house, which we loved for the sake of the one who lived here for a time. And into that higher, truer spiritual life, which our dear one has now fully entered, into its broader spheres of action, its loftier companionships, and its diviner destiny, may we all come through the infinite compassion and power of our loving heavenly Father.

Prayer

ALMIGHTY God, with whom do live the spirits of those who depart hence in the Lord, and with whom the souls of the faithful, after they are delivered from the burden of the flesh, are in joy and felicity; we give thee hearty thanks for the good examples of all those thy servants, who, having finished their course in faith, do now rest from their labors. And we beseech thee that we, with all those who have departed in the true faith of thy holy name, may have our perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul, in thy eternal and everlasting glory, and furthermore, we pray that in the general resurrection in the last day, we may be found acceptable in thy sight; and receive that blessing, which thy well-beloved Son shall then pronounce to all those who love and fear thee, saying, "Come ye blessed of my Father, receive ye the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world." Grant this we beseech thee, O merciful Father, through Jesus Christ our Mediator and Redeemer.

Amen.

—*From the Book of "Common Prayer."*

O Thou Prince of Life and First-Begotten of the dead, who by thy glorious resurrection, hath overcome death and opened unto us the gates of everlasting life; enable us by thy heavenly grace to walk in newness of life, and to abound in the fruits of righteousness, so that we may at last triumph over death and the grave, and rise in Thy likeness, having our vile bodies changed into the fashion of Thine own glorious body, who are God over all, blessed forever.

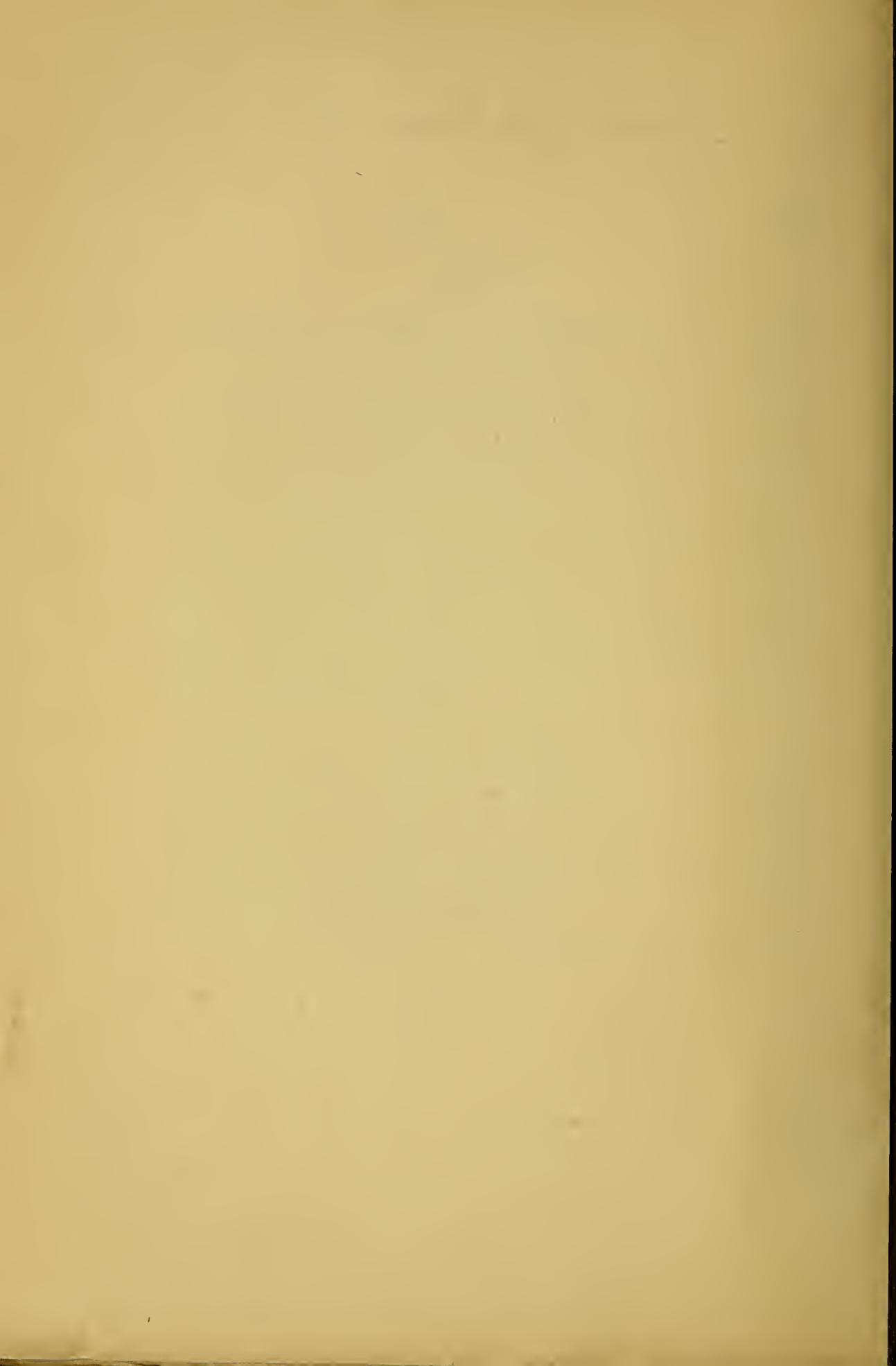
Amen.

—*George Dana Boardman.*

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